



Embassy of the United States of America  
100 Duke & Young Streets, Kingston, Georgetown, Guyana

## **Installment Ninety-one**

### **Ask the Consul – Drug Trafficking**

The U.S. Embassy is very concerned about the increasing number of American citizens and U.S. Legal Permanent Residents who have been arrested in Guyana for narcotics related offences. Often, these individuals, blinded by the prospect of financial gain or other reward, agree to get involved in drug trafficking. The sad reality is that many of them end up in prison or worse. Serving time in prison is difficult, even more so in a foreign country far away from home. American citizens are encouraged to exercise sound judgment if faced with a situation that potentially involves drug trafficking.

The following information (or questions and answers) is intended to increase awareness of the risks and warning signs that lead up to, and the very severe penalties associated with, drug trafficking.

**Q: I am planning a trip to the U.S. and someone asked me to take some packages. What should I do?**

A: You will be held responsible for the contents of your luggage. Do not accept packages from persons you do not know, and do not allow anyone to place packages in your luggage. Be aware that individuals traveling to the U.S. are often tricked into carrying illegal substances. Illegal substances can be concealed in almost anything, so be certain you know what you are carrying in your luggage.

Carrying drugs, either in your luggage or hidden on your person is illegal. Drug laws in Guyana are strict - travelers found carrying even a small amount of narcotics risk long jail sentences and heavy fines.

**Q: If a U.S. Citizen is arrested in Guyana, what assistance can the U.S. Embassy offer?**

A: The Embassy visits arrested U.S. citizens and can notify their family and friends of their detention. **The Embassy cannot get an arrested U.S. citizen out of jail.**

**Q: If a U.S. Citizen is arrested in Guyana, will they be sent home to the U.S. immediately?**

A: No. The individual must face the Guyanese legal system, hire an attorney authorized to practice in Guyana, and often undergo a lengthy legal process. Persons convicted of drug related offenses are often sentenced to – and serve – several years in jail.

**Q: I know some people who are offering to pay my airfare and hotel and give me a paid vacation in Guyana. Is this legitimate?**

A: Any such offer is probably not credible. You will likely be asked to be a drug carrier. Many U.S. citizens have been offered such incentives only to end up in jail. Spending four or five long years in prison is not worth the free trip or cash incentive.

**Q: I am a U.S. citizen and I have already come to Guyana on a free paid vacation and I have been asked to carry drugs back to the U.S. I am afraid and I want to go home.**

A: Do not risk ruining your life by agreeing to carry drugs; it is illegal and you will not be better off if you carry drugs. You will very likely go to jail.

You should contact the American Citizen Services Unit at the US Embassy at 225-4900-9 ext 4222. They can assist you in contacting your friends or family in the U.S. who can wire you funds to help get you back to the U.S. safely.